

individual or cumulative effects on the quality of the human environment. Such actions generally include those identified in §§3407.6(b) and 3407.7 of this part.

(c) Actions normally requiring an EIS are projects which are determined to have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment or which will be performed under extraordinary circumstances. These types of actions are identified in §§3407.6(b) and 3407.8 of this part.

§ 3407.6 Categorical exclusions.

(a) All NIFA actions will be analyzed by the appropriate NIFA official specified in §3407.4(c) to determine whether the project under consideration will have a significant environmental effect prior to recommending to the official responsible for approving a formula project in the case of formula grants, or the official responsible for awarding a grant or cooperative agreement in the case of a grant or cooperative agreement that the action be undertaken. Unless otherwise determined to be necessary under the provisions of paragraph (b) of this section, however, the preparation of an EA or EIS is not required for the following categories of actions:

(1) *Department of Agriculture Categorical Exclusions (7 CFR 1b.3)*. (i) Policy development, planning and implementation which are related to routine activities such as personnel, organizational changes, or similar administrative functions;

(ii) Activities which deal solely with the functions of programs, such as program budget proposals, disbursement, and transfer or reprogramming of funds;

(iii) Inventories, research activities and studies, such as resource inventories and routine data collection when such actions are clearly limited in context and intensity;

(iv) Educational and informational programs and activities;

(v) Civil and criminal law enforcement and investigative activities;

(vi) Activities which are advisory and consultative to other agencies and public and private entities; and

(vii) Activities related to trade representation and market development activities abroad.

(2) *NIFA categorical exclusions* Based on previous experience, the following categories of NIFA actions are excluded because they have been found to have limited scope and intensity and to have no significant individual or cumulative impacts on the quality of the human environment:

(i) The following categories of research programs or projects of limited size and magnitude or with only short-term effects on the environment:

(A) Research conducted within any laboratory, greenhouse, or other contained facility where research practices and safeguards prevent environmental impacts;

(B) Surveys, inventories, and similar studies that have limited context and minimal intensity in terms of changes in the environment; and

(C) Testing outside of the laboratory, such as in small isolated field plots, which involves the routine use of familiar chemicals or biological materials.

(ii) Routine renovation, rehabilitation, or revitalization of physical facilities, including the acquisition and installation of equipment, where such activity is limited in scope and intensity.

(b) Exceptions to categorical exclusions. Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this section, an EA or EIS shall be prepared for an activity which is normally within the purview of categorical exclusion where it is determined by NIFA that substantial controversy on environmental grounds exists or that other extraordinary conditions or circumstances are present which may cause such activity to have a significant environmental effect.

§ 3407.7 Actions normally requiring an environmental assessment.

The following actions normally will require an EA:

(a) Programs supported in whole or in part by NIFA which may result in a particular technology's moving from the field evaluation stage to large-scale demonstration or simulated commercial phase.